

Second Regular Session 119th General Assembly (2016)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2015 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

## SENATE ENROLLED ACT No. 279

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AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning taxation.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

SECTION 1. IC 6-1.1-20-3.1, AS AMENDED BY P.L.203-2015, SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2016]: Sec. 3.1. (a) This section applies only to the following:

(1) A controlled project (as defined in section 1.1 of this chapter as in effect June 30, 2008) for which the proper officers of a political subdivision make a preliminary determination in the manner described in subsection (b) before July 1, 2008.

(2) An elementary school building, middle school building, high school building, or other school building for academic instruction that:

(A) is a controlled project;

(B) will be used for any combination of kindergarten through grade 12; and

(C) will not cost more than ten million dollars (\$10,000,000).

(3) Any other controlled project that:

(A) is not a controlled project described in subdivision (1) or (2); and

(B) will not cost the political subdivision more than the lesser of the following:

(i) Twelve million dollars (\$12,000,000).

(ii) An amount equal to one percent (1%) of the total gross assessed value of property within the political subdivision on the last assessment date, if that amount is at least one



million dollars (\$1,000,000).

(b) A political subdivision may not impose property taxes to pay debt service on bonds or lease rentals on a lease for a controlled project without completing the following procedures:

- (1) The proper officers of a political subdivision shall:
  - (A) publish notice in accordance with IC 5-3-1; and
  - (B) send notice by first class mail to the circuit court clerk and to any organization that delivers to the officers, before January 1 of that year, an annual written request for such notices; of any meeting to consider adoption of a resolution or an ordinance making a preliminary determination to issue bonds or enter into a lease and shall conduct a public hearing on a preliminary determination before adoption of the resolution or ordinance.
- (2) When the proper officers of a political subdivision make a preliminary determination to issue bonds or enter into a lease for a controlled project, the officers shall give notice of the preliminary determination by:
  - (A) publication in accordance with IC 5-3-1; and
  - (B) first class mail to the circuit court clerk and to the organizations described in subdivision (1)(B).
- (3) A notice under subdivision (2) of the preliminary determination of the political subdivision to issue bonds or enter into a lease for a controlled project must include the following information:
  - (A) The maximum term of the bonds or lease.
  - (B) The maximum principal amount of the bonds or the maximum lease rental for the lease.
  - (C) The estimated interest rates that will be paid and the total interest costs associated with the bonds or lease.
  - (D) The purpose of the bonds or lease.
  - (E) A statement that any owners of property within the political subdivision or registered voters residing within the political subdivision who want to initiate a petition and remonstrance process against the proposed debt service or lease payments must file a petition that complies with subdivisions (4) and (5) not later than thirty (30) days after publication in accordance with IC 5-3-1.
  - (F) With respect to bonds issued or a lease entered into to open:
    - (i) a new school facility; or
    - (ii) an existing facility that has not been used for at least



three (3) years and that is being reopened to provide additional classroom space;

the estimated costs the school corporation expects to incur annually to operate the facility.

(G) A statement of whether the school corporation expects to appeal for a new facility adjustment (as defined in IC 20-45-1-16 (repealed) before January 1, 2009) for an increased maximum permissible tuition support levy to pay the estimated costs described in clause (F).

(H) The political subdivision's current debt service levy and rate and the estimated increase to the political subdivision's debt service levy and rate that will result if the political subdivision issues the bonds or enters into the lease.

(4) After notice is given, a petition requesting the application of a petition and remonstrance process may be filed by the lesser of:

- (A) ~~one~~ **five** hundred ~~(100)~~ **(500)** persons who are either owners of property within the political subdivision or registered voters residing within the political subdivision; or
- (B) five percent (5%) of the registered voters residing within the political subdivision.

(5) The state board of accounts shall design and, upon request by the county voter registration office, deliver to the county voter registration office or the county voter registration office's designated printer the petition forms to be used solely in the petition process described in this section. The county voter registration office shall issue to an owner or owners of property within the political subdivision or a registered voter residing within the political subdivision the number of petition forms requested by the owner or owners or the registered voter. Each form must be accompanied by instructions detailing the requirements that:

- (A) the carrier and signers must be owners of property or registered voters;
- (B) the carrier must be a signatory on at least one (1) petition;
- (C) after the signatures have been collected, the carrier must swear or affirm before a notary public that the carrier witnessed each signature; and
- (D) govern the closing date for the petition period.

Persons requesting forms may be required to identify themselves as owners of property or registered voters and may be allowed to pick up additional copies to distribute to other owners of property or registered voters. Each person signing a petition must indicate



whether the person is signing the petition as a registered voter within the political subdivision or is signing the petition as the owner of property within the political subdivision. A person who signs a petition as a registered voter must indicate the address at which the person is registered to vote. A person who signs a petition as an owner of property must indicate the address of the property owned by the person in the political subdivision.

(6) Each petition must be verified under oath by at least one (1) qualified petitioner in a manner prescribed by the state board of accounts before the petition is filed with the county voter registration office under subdivision (7).

(7) Each petition must be filed with the county voter registration office not more than thirty (30) days after publication under subdivision (2) of the notice of the preliminary determination.

(8) The county voter registration office shall determine whether each person who signed the petition is a registered voter. The county voter registration office shall, not more than fifteen (15) business days after receiving a petition, forward a copy of the petition to the county auditor. Not more than ten (10) business days after receiving the copy of the petition, the county auditor shall provide to the county voter registration office a statement verifying:

(A) whether a person who signed the petition as a registered voter but is not a registered voter, as determined by the county voter registration office, is the owner of property in the political subdivision; and

(B) whether a person who signed the petition as an owner of property within the political subdivision does in fact own property within the political subdivision.

(9) The county voter registration office shall, not more than ten (10) business days after receiving the statement from the county auditor under subdivision (8), make the final determination of the number of petitioners that are registered voters in the political subdivision and, based on the statement provided by the county auditor, the number of petitioners that own property within the political subdivision. Whenever the name of an individual who signs a petition form as a registered voter contains a minor variation from the name of the registered voter as set forth in the records of the county voter registration office, the signature is presumed to be valid, and there is a presumption that the individual is entitled to sign the petition under this section. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, in determining whether an



individual is a registered voter, the county voter registration office shall apply the requirements and procedures used under IC 3 to determine whether a person is a registered voter for purposes of voting in an election governed by IC 3. However, an individual is not required to comply with the provisions concerning providing proof of identification to be considered a registered voter for purposes of this chapter. A person is entitled to sign a petition only one (1) time in a particular petition and remonstrance process under this chapter, regardless of whether the person owns more than one (1) parcel of real property, mobile home assessed as personal property, or manufactured home assessed as personal property, or a combination of those types of property within the subdivision and regardless of whether the person is both a registered voter in the political subdivision and the owner of property within the political subdivision. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if a petition is presented to the county voter registration office within forty-five (45) days before an election, the county voter registration office may defer acting on the petition, and the time requirements under this section for action by the county voter registration office do not begin to run until five (5) days after the date of the election.

(10) The county voter registration office must file a certificate and each petition with:

(A) the township trustee, if the political subdivision is a township, who shall present the petition or petitions to the township board; or

(B) the body that has the authority to authorize the issuance of the bonds or the execution of a lease, if the political subdivision is not a township;

within thirty-five (35) business days of the filing of the petition requesting a petition and remonstrance process. The certificate must state the number of petitioners that are owners of property within the political subdivision and the number of petitioners who are registered voters residing within the political subdivision.

If a sufficient petition requesting a petition and remonstrance process is not filed by owners of property or registered voters as set forth in this section, the political subdivision may issue bonds or enter into a lease by following the provisions of law relating to the bonds to be issued or lease to be entered into.

(c) This subsection applies only to a political subdivision that, after April 30, 2011, adopts an ordinance or a resolution making a preliminary determination to issue bonds or enter into a lease subject



to this section and section 3.2 of this chapter. A political subdivision may not artificially divide a capital project into multiple capital projects in order to avoid the requirements of this section and section 3.2 of this chapter. A person that owns property within a political subdivision or a person that is a registered voter residing within a political subdivision may file a petition with the department of local government finance objecting that the political subdivision has artificially divided a capital project into multiple capital projects in order to avoid the requirements of this section and section 3.2 of this chapter. The petition must be filed not more than ten (10) days after the political subdivision makes the preliminary determination to issue the bonds or enter into the lease for the project. If the department of local government finance receives a petition under this subsection, the department shall not later than thirty (30) days after receiving the petition make a final determination on the issue of whether the capital projects were artificially divided.

SECTION 2. IC 6-1.1-20-3.5, AS AMENDED BY P.L.218-2013, SECTION 10, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2016]: Sec. 3.5. (a) This section applies only to a controlled project that meets the following conditions:

(1) The controlled project is described in one (1) of the following categories:

(A) An elementary school building, middle school building, high school building, or other school building for academic instruction that:

- (i) will be used for any combination of kindergarten through grade 12; and
- (ii) will cost more than ten million dollars (\$10,000,000).

(B) Any other controlled project that:

- (i) is not a controlled project described in clause (A); and
- (ii) will cost the political subdivision more than the lesser of twelve million dollars (\$12,000,000) or an amount equal to one percent (1%) of the total gross assessed value of property within the political subdivision on the last assessment date (if that amount is at least one million dollars (\$1,000,000)).

(2) The proper officers of the political subdivision make a preliminary determination after June 30, 2008, in the manner described in subsection (b) to issue bonds or enter into a lease for the controlled project.

(b) A political subdivision may not impose property taxes to pay debt service on bonds or lease rentals on a lease for a controlled project



without completing the following procedures:

(1) The proper officers of a political subdivision shall publish notice in accordance with IC 5-3-1 and send notice by first class mail to the circuit court clerk and to any organization that delivers to the officers, before January 1 of that year, an annual written request for notices of any meeting to consider the adoption of an ordinance or a resolution making a preliminary determination to issue bonds or enter into a lease and shall conduct a public hearing on the preliminary determination before adoption of the ordinance or resolution. The political subdivision must make the following information available to the public at the public hearing on the preliminary determination, in addition to any other information required by law:

(A) The result of the political subdivision's current and projected annual debt service payments divided by the net assessed value of taxable property within the political subdivision.

(B) The result of:

(i) the sum of the political subdivision's outstanding long term debt plus the outstanding long term debt of other taxing units that include any of the territory of the political subdivision; divided by

(ii) the net assessed value of taxable property within the political subdivision.

(C) The information specified in subdivision (3)(A) through (3)(G).

(2) If the proper officers of a political subdivision make a preliminary determination to issue bonds or enter into a lease, the officers shall give notice of the preliminary determination by:

(A) publication in accordance with IC 5-3-1; and

(B) first class mail to the circuit court clerk and to the organizations described in subdivision (1).

(3) A notice under subdivision (2) of the preliminary determination of the political subdivision to issue bonds or enter into a lease must include the following information:

(A) The maximum term of the bonds or lease.

(B) The maximum principal amount of the bonds or the maximum lease rental for the lease.

(C) The estimated interest rates that will be paid and the total interest costs associated with the bonds or lease.

(D) The purpose of the bonds or lease.

(E) A statement that the proposed debt service or lease



payments must be approved in an election on a local public question held under section 3.6 of this chapter.

(F) With respect to bonds issued or a lease entered into to open:

- (i) a new school facility; or
- (ii) an existing facility that has not been used for at least three (3) years and that is being reopened to provide additional classroom space;

the estimated costs the school corporation expects to annually incur to operate the facility.

(G) The political subdivision's current debt service levy and rate and the estimated increase to the political subdivision's debt service levy and rate that will result if the political subdivision issues the bonds or enters into the lease.

(H) The information specified in subdivision (1)(A) through (1)(B).

(4) After notice is given, a petition requesting the application of the local public question process under section 3.6 of this chapter may be filed by the lesser of:

- (A) ~~one~~ **five** hundred ~~(400)~~ **(500)** persons who are either owners of property within the political subdivision or registered voters residing within the political subdivision; or
- (B) five percent (5%) of the registered voters residing within the political subdivision.

(5) The state board of accounts shall design and, upon request by the county voter registration office, deliver to the county voter registration office or the county voter registration office's designated printer the petition forms to be used solely in the petition process described in this section. The county voter registration office shall issue to an owner or owners of property within the political subdivision or a registered voter residing within the political subdivision the number of petition forms requested by the owner or owners or the registered voter. Each form must be accompanied by instructions detailing the requirements that:

- (A) the carrier and signers must be owners of property or registered voters;
- (B) the carrier must be a signatory on at least one (1) petition;
- (C) after the signatures have been collected, the carrier must swear or affirm before a notary public that the carrier witnessed each signature; and
- (D) govern the closing date for the petition period.





Persons requesting forms may be required to identify themselves as owners of property or registered voters and may be allowed to pick up additional copies to distribute to other owners of property or registered voters. Each person signing a petition must indicate whether the person is signing the petition as a registered voter within the political subdivision or is signing the petition as the owner of property within the political subdivision. A person who signs a petition as a registered voter must indicate the address at which the person is registered to vote. A person who signs a petition as an owner of property must indicate the address of the property owned by the person in the political subdivision.

(6) Each petition must be verified under oath by at least one (1) qualified petitioner in a manner prescribed by the state board of accounts before the petition is filed with the county voter registration office under subdivision (7).

(7) Each petition must be filed with the county voter registration office not more than thirty (30) days after publication under subdivision (2) of the notice of the preliminary determination.

(8) The county voter registration office shall determine whether each person who signed the petition is a registered voter. However, after the county voter registration office has determined that at least ~~one hundred twenty-five (125)~~ **five hundred twenty-five (525)** persons who signed the petition are registered voters within the political subdivision, the county voter registration office is not required to verify whether the remaining persons who signed the petition are registered voters. If the county voter registration office does not determine that at least ~~one hundred twenty-five (125)~~ **five hundred twenty-five (525)** persons who signed the petition are registered voters, the county voter registration office, not more than fifteen (15) business days after receiving a petition, shall forward a copy of the petition to the county auditor. Not more than ten (10) business days after receiving the copy of the petition, the county auditor shall provide to the county voter registration office a statement verifying:

(A) whether a person who signed the petition as a registered voter but is not a registered voter, as determined by the county voter registration office, is the owner of property in the political subdivision; and

(B) whether a person who signed the petition as an owner of property within the political subdivision does in fact own property within the political subdivision.

(9) The county voter registration office, not more than ten (10)



business days after determining that at least ~~one hundred twenty-five (125)~~ **five hundred twenty-five (525)** persons who signed the petition are registered voters or after receiving the statement from the county auditor under subdivision (8) (as applicable), shall make the final determination of whether a sufficient number of persons have signed the petition. Whenever the name of an individual who signs a petition form as a registered voter contains a minor variation from the name of the registered voter as set forth in the records of the county voter registration office, the signature is presumed to be valid, and there is a presumption that the individual is entitled to sign the petition under this section. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, in determining whether an individual is a registered voter, the county voter registration office shall apply the requirements and procedures used under IC 3 to determine whether a person is a registered voter for purposes of voting in an election governed by IC 3. However, an individual is not required to comply with the provisions concerning providing proof of identification to be considered a registered voter for purposes of this chapter. A person is entitled to sign a petition only one (1) time in a particular referendum process under this chapter, regardless of whether the person owns more than one (1) parcel of real property, mobile home assessed as personal property, or manufactured home assessed as personal property or a combination of those types of property within the political subdivision and regardless of whether the person is both a registered voter in the political subdivision and the owner of property within the political subdivision. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if a petition is presented to the county voter registration office within forty-five (45) days before an election, the county voter registration office may defer acting on the petition, and the time requirements under this section for action by the county voter registration office do not begin to run until five (5) days after the date of the election.

(10) The county voter registration office must file a certificate and each petition with:

- (A) the township trustee, if the political subdivision is a township, who shall present the petition or petitions to the township board; or
- (B) the body that has the authority to authorize the issuance of the bonds or the execution of a lease, if the political subdivision is not a township;



within thirty-five (35) business days of the filing of the petition requesting the referendum process. The certificate must state the number of petitioners who are owners of property within the political subdivision and the number of petitioners who are registered voters residing within the political subdivision.

(11) If a sufficient petition requesting the local public question process is not filed by owners of property or registered voters as set forth in this section, the political subdivision may issue bonds or enter into a lease by following the provisions of law relating to the bonds to be issued or lease to be entered into.

(c) If the proper officers of a political subdivision make a preliminary determination to issue bonds or enter into a lease, the officers shall provide to the county auditor:

- (1) a copy of the notice required by subsection (b)(2); and
- (2) any other information the county auditor requires to fulfill the county auditor's duties under section 3.6 of this chapter.

SECTION 3. IC 20-46-1-5.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A **NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]:** **Sec. 5.5. As used in this chapter, "resolution to extend a referendum levy" refers to a resolution adopted under sections 8 and 8.5 of this chapter to place a referendum on the ballot requesting authority to continue imposing a tax rate, which is the same as or lower than the tax rate previously approved by the voters of the school corporation.**

SECTION 4. IC 20-46-1-8, AS AMENDED BY P.L.166-2014, SECTION 40, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: **Sec. 8. (a) Subject to this chapter, the governing body of a school corporation may adopt a resolution to place a referendum under this chapter on the ballot for either of the following purposes:**

- (1) The governing body of the school corporation determines that it cannot, in a calendar year, carry out its public educational duty unless it imposes a referendum tax levy under this chapter.
- (2) The governing body of the school corporation determines that a referendum tax levy under this chapter should be imposed to replace property tax revenue that the school corporation will not receive because of the application of the credit under IC 6-1.1-20.6.

(b) The governing body of the school corporation shall certify a copy of the resolution to the following:

- (1) The department of local government finance, including ~~(in the case of a resolution certified to the department of local~~



~~government finance after April 30, 2011)~~ the language for the question required by section 10 of this chapter, ~~In the case of a resolution certified to the department of local government finance after April 30, 2011, or in the case of a resolution to extend a referendum levy certified to the department of local government finance after March 15, 2016, section 10.1 of this chapter.~~ The department shall review the language for compliance with section 10 **or 10.1** of this chapter, **whichever is applicable**, and either approve or reject the language. The department shall send its decision to the governing body of the school corporation not more than ten (10) days after the resolution is submitted to the department. If the language is approved, the governing body of the school corporation shall certify a copy of the resolution, including the language for the question and the department's approval.

(2) The county fiscal body of each county in which the school corporation is located (for informational purposes only).

(3) The circuit court clerk of each county in which the school corporation is located.

SECTION 5. IC 20-46-1-8.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A **NEW** SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: **Sec. 8.5. A resolution to extend a referendum levy must be:**

**(1) adopted by the governing body of a school corporation; and**

**(2) approved in a referendum under this chapter; before December 31 of the final calendar year in which the school corporation's previously approved referendum levy is imposed under this chapter.**

SECTION 6. IC 20-46-1-10, AS AMENDED BY P.L.155-2014, SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 10. **(a) This section does not apply to a referendum on a resolution certified to the department of local government finance after March 15, 2016, to extend a referendum levy.**

**(b)** The question to be submitted to the voters in the referendum must read as follows:

"For the \_\_\_\_ (insert number) calendar year or years immediately following the holding of the referendum, shall the school corporation impose a property tax rate that does not exceed \_\_\_\_\_ (insert amount) cents (\$0.\_\_\_\_) (insert amount) on each one hundred dollars (\$100) of assessed valuation and that is



in addition to all other property taxes imposed by the school corporation for the purpose of funding \_\_\_\_\_  
(insert short description of purposes)?".

SECTION 7. IC 20-46-1-10.1 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A **NEW** SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: **Sec. 10.1. (a) This section applies only to a referendum to allow a school corporation to extend a referendum levy.**

**(b) The question to be submitted to the voters in the referendum must read as follows:**

"For the \_\_\_\_ (insert number) calendar year or years immediately following the holding of the referendum, shall the school corporation continue to impose a property tax rate that does not exceed \_\_\_\_\_ (insert amount) cents (\$0.\_\_\_\_) (insert amount) on each one hundred dollars (\$100) of assessed valuation and for the purpose of funding \_\_\_\_\_ (insert short description of purposes)?

The tax rate requested in this referendum was originally approved by the voters in the \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of the school corporation) in \_\_\_\_\_ (insert the year in which the referendum tax levy was approved).".

**(c) The number of years for which a referendum tax levy may be extended if the public question under this section is approved may not exceed the number of years for which the expiring referendum tax levy was imposed.**

SECTION 8. An emergency is declared for this act.



\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Senate

\_\_\_\_\_  
President Pro Tempore

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor of the State of Indiana

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

